

From: Jeebus
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

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CC: activism@moraldefense.com@inetgw, letters@capitalis...

DOJ,

Your fallible and spurious pursuit of Microsoft does my, and many others, hearts, wallets, and American way of life a great disservice. What you have chosen to do is attack a company for perceived improprieties and anti-trust accused--not by consumers--but by competitors. Those who could not make a product affordable, user-friendly, or customizable enough for the market have used you, the DOJ, as a device to focus their enmity and commercial jealousy. They lost; that is one of the side effects of capitalism--simple enough.

I have used Microsoft products for the past nine years; I am now a Microsoft Certified Professional and network securities enthusiast. I began my computer life using Tandy and Apple IIe computers. They loaded their entire software suite from a floppy disk; to change a program required the computer to be shut off and restarted...each and every time. Microsoft created a full-fledge graphical user interface that allowed spreadsheets, documents, calculators, and vast panoply of Microsoft and 3rd-party software followed. Was Microsoft the first with a GUI? No. Was Microsoft the first with spreadsheets, word programs and games? No. What Microsoft created--and still creates--was an affordable easy to use solution for the mainstream public. Most people could neither afford UNIX-based machines nor did they have the inclination to learn to use the vastly complex UNIX operating system. Microsoft changed that. Cheap machinery; cheap, easy to use software; "double-click and go" ease was what Microsoft brought to the marketplace.

I currently run Windows 2000 Advanced Server at home for my Microsoft training and I happen to like it. Click here, click there, from time to time a written command at a DOS prompt and everything falls in line. Contrast that with my Linux machine and that is non-stop reading, non-stop typing, and an intricate and sometimes evil, if you will, operating system to troubleshoot. I appreciate the ease of use that Microsoft has brought me and millions of others.

In my time as a network administrator, I have seen the ease and comfort that Microsoft brings users and administrators alike. After watching my boss of many years Novell training struggle and fight using Novell 5.0 and then watching the ease with which he took to NT server and 2000 server, I cannot make the claim that Microsoft is a superior product; what I can do is claim that it is the superior product for the end-user experience and configuration. With Microsoft, an installed server can be up and running set to use DHCP, NAT, routing, print sharing and the like in under two hours. With others operating systems (IRIX, LINUX, SCO-UNIX), that could take a work day.

When I spent my money on parts for my computer that would go in my home for my personal use and my enjoyment, I did not expect the government to sit back and punish a company that made a great product and attempt to dictate what goes on my computer. They bundle IE...so what? It's free anyway. If Netscape were so great, people would download it, uninstall IE and use Netscape only. Consumers are driven by excellence and ease of use. The Yugo was an easy to use car but it was a horribly Spartan and an unreliable machine--compare that to Hyundai, a manufacturer of also easy to use machines that happen to be reliable. My point is, the consumer will dictate where the market will go. If television viewers grow weary of reality TV, the executives of the station see that fact in the ratings and simply show something else. If a user does not like a web browser, they will undoubtedly search for another one until they feel they have something that befits them. The arrogance of the DOJ in dictating to me what I can use, if I find it excellent or not, is overwhelmingly anti-capitalist. I make the decision of what I want to buy; I make the decision as to what I want to use, not the DOJ. If I find it lacking, then that company has simply lost another customer. If enough share my opinion, the company will cease that product or die a free-market death as they should.

One overwhelming flaw in the DOJ's case is that the charges against Microsoft were not brought by the consumer, but by Microsoft's business rivals. SUN, unarguably, makes fantastic servers and mesmerizing stable operating systems. What they do not do, however, is bring a product to the mainstream consumer level. If they really cared about competing they would make an x86-compatible operating system. They recently decided to scrap that notion. I severely want to learn to use the SUN OS for my future computer work but why would I buy a \$4,000 entry-level workstation to play with when I could enjoy the fruits of an OS for free or some trivial price? There is simply no incentive as an end-user to spend so much money on the hopes of having a satisfying experience with a computer.

Netscape is a company with numerous product failures and encryption flaws. Their software is bloated, unresponsive, and prone to crash. They force users to register an email address and user name to use their latest software. They thusly inundate one with email and sell user names and email addresses to their advertisers. Microsoft does none of these things. To use IE you choose 'No' to set up an internet account and you are done. This next point may seem trivial but after watching end-users for three years on this issue, I have a good idea of what I am writing: people hate Netscape. When they click on the Netscape icon, 9 times out of 10 it will load successfully (and this is on the latest and best from Dell); when Netscape cannot load a page properly, it hangs and does not allow the user to press 'stop' or 'reload'; it simply holds them in suspense while IE allows you to press 'stop' and go on to another page. Netscape, upon loading, takes a good six seconds on even the fastest machines. IE opens before you realize the mouse button after clicking its icon. Users make note of these things. I watched an entire department bemoan and spew forth mountains of rancor against Netscape because they were forced to use it for its email incorporation. Only for email would they use this product and at every turn they would complain to me about it. Just because a product has a huge market share does not mean the product was put there through illegal avenues. SUN dominates certain sectors of the server market because they make fantastic systems; why not haul them in for anti-trust charges of dominating the market?

A much more important issue evidenced by the DOJ's action against Microsoft is the perception amongst the public that the DOJ is attacking excellence and ingenuity. I'll try not to belabor the point but it is quite evident to anyone who can read or think that this type of action leads to socialist and communist states. If you attack and besmirch those who excel in the name of those who fail, then you punish achievement and laud failure. What example does this set for a capitalist society? The reason for America's success (as opposed to others' failures) is its free and open market. With millions of points of ingenuity and creativity, we have secured ourselves in a system that, should one point fail, others will step in and take its place--with the government, there is one, inculpable point of failure and no good can come of that. What the DOJ is doing is saying that no point can ever go out, no flame ever extinguished. I do not know if this is the product of bleeding-heart liberalism or people who do not even understand their own economy. Take, for example, SGI. SGI used to have a monopoly on high-end graphics for movie special effects. With Moore's Law and the decreasing price of computer hardware (coupled with the increase in graphical power), SGI is a dinosaur. The SGI seems to only exist for massive render farms (e.g., Los Alamos nuclear research) and FAA virtual airports. HP's line of PA-RISC and fx chips; Intel and AMD getting strong floating-point performance; nVidia and 3D Labs with affordable and extremely powerful hardware; and Microsoft and Linux clustering ability have made SGI a thing of the past for most corporations and movie studios. Why spend \$30k for one machine when you could buy four machines, one with graphics card and three to support rendering, that would be geometrically faster than the SGI for a fraction of the price? It's called innovation. SGI failed to adjust for the low-end market and they have rightly suffered. Should you punish the collective of HP, Intel, AMD, nVidia, 3D Labs, Microsoft and Linux, for excelling where SGI fails? I think not. It would be foolish and an instantaneous blockade to our free market. Why then, do you attack Microsoft for excelling where Netscape and other competitors fail? You really believe that bundling software is some brazen act of

anti-trust? That would be laughable were it not so arrogant. Realplayer bundles a host of, to me, chintzy and useless software. What do I do with them if happen to need the basic Realplayer? I uninstall them. While you might make not that IE cannot completely be uninstalled because the registry of Windows is closely coupled with the IE kernel, deleting the icons to IE is, to most people, the same as uninstalling it. Don't like it, don't use it. I have some forks and spoons that I don't like; I do not sue them for being in the drawer, I just ignore them.

I used to remember a time when I and others were encouraged to excel. Seems times have changed. In America, with the 'progressive' and politically correct movement, there are no definitive wrongs or absolutes--except that the unapologetically wealthy and anything remotely Western civilization are bad. If I were poor, I would be embraced. If I wrote a book or invented something and became wealthy, I would be repugned and hated by the very people who used to love me because they considered me to be oppressed by America. The DOJ is taking this same stance. By attacking Microsoft for its excellence, you embrace losers, yes "losers", and say to them that you'll take care of them because failure is alright and nothing to ashamed about--and two plus two equals five.

The federal government, other than national defense, does nothing as well or efficiently as the private sector. It is proven over decades and decades of empirical evidence--look at public schools; mountains of failure and no one to hold responsible. Why now then, does the DOJ believe it can put the hand of the government in the private sector and make things better? The government will only destroy our economy. The private sector is the economy. The government is a tool of the people, to serve our needs, not to mollycoddle and pander to the losers of our free market. There is nothing quite as bad as an untouchable, inculpable government overseer asserting power where it has proven, time and again, its incompetence. When the government fails, there is no one to hold responsible. The knowledge of such has proven to be quite the intoxicant for the DOJ.

Please cease this case against Microsoft. You only do American citizens and the economy harm.